Polygonum parryi Greene
Parry's knotweed
Polygonaceae (Knotweed Family)

Status: State Threatened
Rank: G4S1?

General Description: Adapted from Hitchcock et al. (1964): A hairless, compact, often cushion-like annual herb with simple stems or stems that are branched at the base, ¾ to 3 1/8 in. (2 to 8 cm) tall, and hairless. The leaves are linear-lanceolate, subulate, ¼ to ¾ in. (5 to 20 mm) long, 1/64 to 1/32 in. (0.4 to 1 mm) wide, 3-veined, hairless, with revolute margins and a spine tipped apex. A stipular sheath encloses the base of the leaf. This stipular sheath is 1/16 to ¼ in. (2 to 5 mm), hairless, disintegrates into white and curled fibers, and the free part is deeply lacerate. Petioles are lacking. The stipules are mostly strongly overlapping, whitish, deeply lacerate, and somewhat curled into slender divisions. The flowers are single in the axils of leaves and bracts, closed, and sessile (subsessile). The perianth is usually reddish, 1/16 to 1 in. (1½ to 2½ mm) long, tightly investing the fruit, and divided nearly to the base into 5 segments. There are usually 8 stamens, with only the inner 3 fertile. There are 3 subsessile stigmas. The smooth, lustrous, ovate achene is slightly exerted from the perianth at maturity, is 1/16 in. (1.2 to 2 mm), and has subequal faces. The stigmas are almost sessile.

Identification Tips: *Polygonum parryi* is most closely related to *P. heterosepalum* and *P. californicum*. *P. parryi* can be distinguished from the other two species by its stipules and flowers. The segments of the stipules of *P. parryi* are slender, not rigid, and usually more or less crisped or curled. *P. parryi* has one flower per axil. The segments of the stipules of *P. heterosepalum* and *P. californicum* are rigid, straight, stiffly erect and almost bristly. *P. heterosepalum* and *P. parryi* often have more than one flower per axil. *P. californicum* is also openly branched and 1½ to 11¾ in. (4 to 30 cm) tall, whereas *P. parryi* is compact, cushion-like and ¼ to 2¾ in. (1 to 7 cm) tall.

Phenology: Throughout its range in the Pacific Northwest, this species is identifiable from May to July.

Range: This species is found from Klickitat County, Washington, occasionally southward, east of the Cascades, to southern Oregon, and it is common from northern to southern California.

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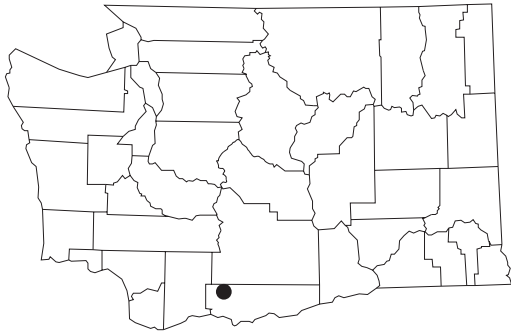
Illustration by Jeanne R. Janish

Known distribution of
Polygonum parryi
in Washington



● Current (1980+)
◎ Historic (older than 1980)

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2003 Produced as part of a cooperative project between the Washington Department of Natural Resources, Washington Natural Heritage Program and the U.S.D.I. Bureau of Land Management. Persons needing this information in an alternative format, call (360) 902-1600 or TTY (360) 902-1125.

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Habitat: *Polygonum parryi* is found in vernally moist areas in otherwise dry habitats. In Washington, this species has been seen at 2100 ft (640 m) in low damp ground and is confined to an oak community on gravelly volcanic clay loam over basalt bedrock that probably has subsurface moisture through the growing season. The microsite in which it appears is open, sparsely vegetated areas in loose volcanic soil. Associated species include Oregon white oak (*Quercus garryana*), oceanspray (*Holodiscus discolor*), cheatgrass (*Bromus tectorum*), soft brome (*Bromus mollis*), rareflower heterocodon (*Heterocodon rariflorum*), barestem biscuitroot (*Lomatium nudicaule*), grassy tarweed (*Madia gracilis*), American bird's-foot trefoil (*Lotus purshianus*), spreading groundsmoke (*Gayophytum diffusum*), and prairie Junegrass (*Koeleria cristata*)

Ecology: This species grows in dry to wet areas at low elevations.

State Status Comments: This species is known from one historical occurrence and one extant occurrence in Klickitat County. Very little is known about this species in Washington.

Inventory Needs: Heavy gravelly soils and vernal pools in Klickitat County should be systematically surveyed for additional populations. The one known site should be revisited.

Threats and Management Concerns: Definite threats have not been identified for this species. However, the small range of this taxon in Washington and the small number of known occurrences are major concerns. Any disturbance to the immediate habitat, such as grazing, development, recreational activities, or hydrologic change, may constitute a threat.

References:

Hitchcock, C.L., A. Cronquist, M. Ownbey, J.W. Thompson. 1964. *Vascular Plants of the Pacific Northwest* Part 2: *Salicaceae to Saxifragaceae.* University of Washington Press, Seattle, WA. 597 pp.

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